Edwards Mayor.

Curia Special. tent. in Festo Sanctorum *Simonis & Judæ*, 28. die *Octobris*, 1679. Annoq; Regni Regis CAROLI Secundi, *Angliæ*, &c. xxxi.

THis COURT doth desire Dr. Woodroffe to Print his Sermon Preached at the Guild-Hall Chappel, on Sunday last, before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of this City.

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A

SERMON

Preached before the

RIGHT HONORABLE

THE

Lord Mayor,

AND

ALDERMEN of the City of LONDON,

AT THE

GUILD-HALL Chappel,

October 26. 1679.

BY

BENJAMIN WOODROFFE, D.D.

Canon of Christ-Church in *Oxford*, and

Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

LONDON:

Printed by *M. Clark*, for *Walter Kettilby*, at the Bishops Head in St. *Pauls* Church-Yard. 1679.

To the Right Honourable

Sir *JAMES EDWARDS*

Lord Mayor of *LONDON*,

And to the

Court of ALDERMEN.

Right Honourable,

IF you ſuffer not in your Judgment by commanding the following Diſcourſe to be made publick, I am very well ſatisfied, I cannot in my Obedience, it being the beſt Application of any Sermon, next to that of the Hearers practice, to be inforced by ſo good Authority; Eſpecially where the chief deſign of what is deliver'd in it, is but to diſcover ſome of thoſe preſent Epidemick Diſtempers of the Nation, for which in your wiſe Counſels, you have allready preſcribed ſuch wholſom Remedies; ſo that in what the Preacher is moſt earneſt to be heard, 'tis only where you have been ſo before him; I mean, as in your timely diſcountenancing thoſe men of evil deſigns, who matter not what name they make uſe of, no not, though it be that of the beſt Religion, the Reform'd Proteſtant Faith it ſelf, to bring us into diſorder and confuſion; ſo in your Care to reſtrain that exorbitant Licence

cence of the Preſs, ſo much of late abuſed to the purpoſes of Sedition and Rebellion, as if what was the Invention of a Soldier at firſt (for ſo Printing was) muſt have ſo much of its Author, as to be ſtill ſounding the Alarm to the Public: But (God be thanked) you have not been wanting to do your Parts to prevent all its miſchiefs, you have not been wanting in your Wiſdoms to divert the Ruin, on the Brink whereof we have ſo long ſtood; you have hitherto been the Shield *to defend us (let me uſe the words of my Context) againſt* the Bow the Wicked had bent, a-gainſt the Arrow they had made ready on the ſtring: *Nor need we fear* the deſtroying the Foundations, *as long as it ſhall pleaſe God in his good Providence to keep* this great and Royal City upon a firm bottom; *that is, as long as you ſhall go on to Execute the good Laws, under which to the dread of our Enemies, and the Envy of all round about us, we may ſo ſafely dwell: As long as you ſhall continue to uphold the Eſtabliſht Religion, which in ſo critical a time you have ſo worthily avowed: Let but this* Jeruſalem, *be* as a City that is *thus Compact together, and at Unity within itſelf: Do but you go on to lead the Example of Loyalty to the moſt Gracious and beſt of Princes, and of Obedience to his and Gods righteous Commands, the Reverence you pay the Laws, will be return'd in the Obedience due to your* own Government, *the Care you have for the true Religion, repaid in the Care God will have of you: Nor is it, I truſt, a mean inſtance of this his Care, that, (as 'tis ſo frequently applied to the Judges he raiſed up to deliver his own people) thoſe whom*

whom you call out to it, ſeem to be ſuch on whom His Spirit is *to carry them through their weighty charge: 'Tis your Honour, 'Tis your Happineſs that your own Body ſtill furniſhes you with Members worthy ſo great imployments, That as in this nick of time, wherein I am commanded this Duty, If the ſame Perſon whoſe name is prefixt to the* Order *continues not in the* Office *to ſee it Executed, however the* Office *and* Government *ſtill ſurvive the ſame; and* one Excellent Magiſtrate *lays not down the* Sword, *but to deliver it up to Another, who will not fail to wield it in Defence of the* ſame Laws *and the* ſame Religion: *That God Almighty would ſtrengthen your hands, and hearts in both, ſhall be the dutiful Prayer of,*

Right Honourable,

Your moſt humble and

Obedient Servant,

Benjamin Woodroffe.

A

SERMON

ON

PSALM xi. 3.

If the Foundations be destroyed, what can the Righteous do?

THE *Psalm* whereof these words are a part is a short, but full description of the Treatment good men are to expect from the wicked in this world; and that is, to be the mark of all their malice; and cruelty: as a Bird pursued by the Fowler, to be chased *into the mountains*, *verse* 1. and as the Metaphor is carried on *verse* 2. *to have the bow still bent against them, the arrow made ready upon the string*; and that if possible, to wound *them in the very soul*, *verse* 1. *so to shoot privily at the upright in heart*, as to aim the blow at that

Uprightneſs, that Integrity, and Innocence, which ſhould ſupport them againſt other injuries.

According to which deſign of theirs, the Holy Ghoſt elſewhere deſcribes them *travelling with iniquity, and conceiving miſchief*, in the ſeventh *Pſalm* at the 14. *verſe*, 'tis the Birth which their Brain and Imagination is in pain to bring forth: *They deviſe it on their beds*, *Pſalm* xxxvi. 4. and as tis *Proverbs* iv. 16. *Sleep not there, except they bring it to paſs: tis in their hands*, Pſal. xxvi. 10. *Under their Tongues*, Pſalm x. 7. *and in their hearts*, Pſalm. xxviii. 3. *'tis what they ſport to do*, Proverbs x. 23. *and boaſt that they are mighty in it*, Pſalm lii. 1. Little mattering what deſolations they make in the Earth; How they put the whole courſe of Nature out of Order; what *Foundations they deſtroy*, ſo they may but involve the Righteous in the ſame ruin with themſelves.

And where this is the ſad ſtate of Affairs (as, God knows, 'tis not the fault of the Devil, and his wicked Inſtruments, if it be not every where ſo) as it follows in the Text, *What can the Righteous do?* What defence and protection can he hope for, whom

whom the Innocence, which ſhould be his ſafeguard, thus expoſes to the greateſt dangers? Yes, the very miſchief intended againſt him, ought to be his ſupport; For, as 'tis againſt *his ſoul*, that impregnable part of the good man, which no malice, no violence can reach; As, 'tis againſt that *Heart*, and the uprightneſs of it, at *they which privily ſhoot*, whoſe *Security* as well as *Religion* it is, to put *its Truſt in the Lord*, verſe 1. So, 'tis not without the good Providence of Him, in whom he Truſts; not without his tendereſt Care, and Affection, who is *too Holy*, *too Powerful*, *too Wiſe*, *too Juſt* to permit his ruin; which is the ſum of the latter part of the *Pſalm*: From all which put together, the Propoſitions we ſhall raiſe to be inſiſted on ſhall be theſe two.

1. That in the miſchiefs the wicked deſign againſt the Righteous, their great aim and buſineſs is to *deſtroy all Foundations*.

2. That in theſe deſigns of the Wicked againſt the Righteous, all that the Righteous can do, is to *truſt in God*.

1. That in the miſchiefs the wicked deſign againſt the Righteous, their great aim and buſineſs is *to deſtroy all Foundations*.

And here we ſhall have to conſider,

1. What the *Foundations* are the wicked are ſo ſolicitous to deſtroy.

2. What the Intereſt, and true grounds are, which move them to ſuch attempts.

3. With ſome reflections on their great folly in ſuch their deſigns.

1. As to what the *Foundations* are the Wicked are ſo ſolicitous *to deſtroy*; what can *theſe* be, but the *Foundations*, as I may ſay, which would otherwiſe *deſtroy* them; and thoſe are, whatever it is, on which is built the *Stability* either of *Church*, or *State*:

Such are, with reſpect to the *One*, all *Civil Government*, and the *Laws* by it Enacted; with reſpect to the *Other*, the *Principles of Faith and true Religion.*

And very well may *theſe* be called *Foundations*, becauſe, what *Foundations* are to any *Fabric*, by upholding, and ſecuring it from becoming a Ruinous, and Diſordered Heap, that are *theſe* with reference to *Human Society*, as ſerving to ſupport the ſeveral Members, and parts of it, in a *Settled*, *Regular*, and *Eſtabliſht dependence* on each other.

'Tis

'Tis by *Government*, *Good Laws*, and *Religion* that this *Rational Building* is held up: That the *Whole* world is preſerved from falling back into a worſe *diſorder, and confuſion*, than that *Natural Chaos*, that *void formleſs* State was, out of which 'twas at firſt taken. Geneſ. i. 2.

Hence the *Royal Pſalmiſt* reflecting on the *Corruptions*, which in his time had prevailed in *Church*, and *State*, When *He* was put by the exerciſe of his juſt Authority, ſpeaketh *of them*, as of what tended to the utter *diſſolution of the Earth, and the Inhabitants thereof*, Pſalm lxxv. 3. and *of Himſelf*, to whom the Care of their *Laws*, and *Religion* was committed, as *bearing up the Pillars thereof.*

And in the lxxxix. *Pſalm* 14. he tells us, ſpeaking of God himſelf, that *Judgment and Juſtice are the habitation of his Throne* מְכוֹן ſays the Hebrew, *It's Foundation or Eſtabliſhment.*

So that we ſee, what it is, we are to underſtand by *Foundations*, namely thoſe *Righteous Laws*, which are neceſſary to ſupport the *Government* of *God* and *Man*, and ſerve to hold the ſeveral parts of the *Rational Creation* from ſtarting aſide from the

Hieronymus *Leges interpretatur, quas ait diſſipatas tum fuiſſe Tyrannide Saulis.*

the *Square and Rule*, by which they ſubſiſt, the next thing we have to conſider, is

2. What the Intereſt and true Grounds are which move the *wicked* to their attempts againſt the *Righteous*; and that is, nothing elſe but their *being wicked*, i. e. Thoſe diſſolute, ungovern'd wretches, who can themſelves ſet no limits to the Extravagancies of their ill Life, and are ſo heinouſly offended, that the Laws do it for them; That *Theſe* are the *Hook* put into the Noſe of the Violent and Oppreſſor: the *Bridle* to check the Luſt and Vices of the Intemperate and Unchaſt: of the Backbiter and Reviler. How doth it grieve them that Authority hath ſet thoſe *Bounds*, and *Landmarks* to the *Property* of their Neighbour, which the unjuſt cannot remove without invading his own quiet? That there is that *Yoke* on the Neck of the *Sons of Belial*, which will gall the Diſobedient and Rebellious in all their ſtrugglings againſt it? That to reſiſt the *Scepter* their Lawful Soveraign holds over them, is but to turn it into a *Rod of Iron*.

And

And as in *Civil Matters*, ſo in *Matters of Religion*, How are *theſe the unacceptable Remembrances of God*, and *the ſervice* due to him, and in the neglect thereof, of a *day of Reckoning*; of that *fearful expectation of Judgment*, which is always ſhaking *the Rod over them*? This is that, which makes them ſo much concerned to *deſtroy theſe Foundations*, at once to quit themſelves of *thoſe Fetters* which not only tye their *hands from* outward wrongs, but what is much ſeverer, *bind* up their *minds* too, ſo perplex and intangle their Conſciences, that they can have no comfort, no freedom in their moſt proſperous Miſchiefs.

Alas could they but once caſt off *theſe cords from them, and break theſe Bonds aſunder*, Pſalm ii. 3. Were there no *heir of reſtraint* as the Magiſtrate is ſtiled *Judg.* xviii. 7. *No King in* Iſrael *to hinder every man from doing that which was right in his own Eyes*, *Judges* xvii. 6. None to curb the humour, or fury of the multitude: Might they but have the pleaſure to ruin themſelves and others without controul, what a happy *Liberty of Conſcience* were this to theſe men?

This

This, 'tis true, is what wicked men would fain be at, and without which they cannot hope to compass their mischievous designs against the Righteous: Forasmuch as 'tis for the *safety* of such that all *Laws* are made, in their *defence*, that *Religion inforces* them. And how have they in all Ages laboured to root out the Principles of *both*? How Zealous have they been to quarrel at the most Prudent, and Sober Decrees of their *Superiors*, and what is much more, at his Decrees who is *higher than the highest*?

What *Leviathans* have there been still to rise up against God, and his Providence? What endeavours either wholly to efface, or at least corrupt the Notions, which are implanted in the minds of Men, of the Deity, and his Government?

How hath Religion too been brought in to serve a purpose, and the very *Liberty of the Gospel* corruptly applied to maintain *Schism* and *Rebellion*?

Nay the very *Spiritual* part of Christianity, the *worshipping God in Truth*, i. e. in the heart and inward man, made use of by the *Enthusiast*, and *Fanatick* to discharge them from all Conscience of their Duty?

Duty? And can there be any *groſſer Scandal* caſt upon the *Goſpel*, than to make it thus contrary to *the Law*!

Is there any greater *indignity* can be offered to our *good Maſter*, who was himſelf ſo obſervant of all the *Laws of his Nation*, ſo tender of his Obedience to the *Magiſtrate*, as by a *Miracle* to pay *Tribute to Ceſar*? and hath by *himſelf*, and his *Apoſtles* ſo ſtrictly injoined ſubjection to the *higher Powers*, than, that either he *by whom Kings Reign, and Princes decree Juſtice*, or his Religion, ſhould be traduced as deſtructive of both?

Matth. xvii. 27. Rom. xiii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 17. 2 Pet. ii. 10. Jude 8. Prover. viii. 15.

And 'tis a reproach I confeſs, which ſticks on ſome who call themſelves by his name, I would to God, thoſe, many of them, who in ſhew, and outward appearance run out ſo much in their Zeal againſt them, were not their greateſt *Factors*: God forbid, I ſhould judg any man, but let every one lay his hand on his *heart*, and ſeriouſly conſider in his own Conſcience, whether the *Heats*, and *Diviſions*, the *Jealouſies*, and *Heart-burnings*, which are at preſent ſo much among us, do not moſt effectually carry on *their work*: If the wicked, our Enemies, *have bent the bow*,

and made ready the arrow upon the ſtring, as 'tis in the context, are not they who promote *theſe*, the men who have diſcharged it for them, have ſhot out the *others arrows*, in their *bitter words*?

Pſal. lxiv. 3.

'Twas the complaint of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Chapter xx. verſe 5. *I have heard the defaming of many: Fear on every ſide, report ſay they, and we will report*: I wiſh our Times did not furniſh us with too many inſtances of this nature, and that in thoſe men, who do not only as it there follows *watch for*, but are ready to make the *Halting* of the Righteous; Thoſe, whatever they ſay, who ſtrike at the very *Foundations*, whoſe greateſt Joy 'twould be to ſee the Nation bereft of the *Security of her Laws*, and the *Comforts of her Religion*: Only I cannot but rejoice too, as *all good men* muſt, that in ſuch Times as theſe, wherein *to be open*, and *plaindealing*, 'to *dare to love*, and *vindicate Truth*, is to expoſe ones ſelf to the Calumny of every *Scurrilous Libeller*, I, and all good men cannot but rejoice in our hearts, I ſpeak it to the Honour of this *great and Royal City, and the good and wiſe Government thereof*, that like what is given in the *Character of the heavenly* Jeruſalem,

(and

(and may *Jeruſalem*, the City where *they ſhall ſee Peace*, be always its name) that, I ſay, like what is given in the *Character of the heavenly* Jeruſalem, you have made it your ſingular Care, that *whoſoever loveth and maketh a lye*, barking, ſnarling wretches as they are, ſhould *be ſhut out with Dogs*. And may you go on ſtill to juſtifie your Authority, the *Authority of that Law, which cannot but protect them, who make it their Rule*: Never may thoſe, who have ill will at *Zion*, be ſo proſperous as to ſee the day, when you either want *Power*, or *Will* to execute it. Never may the *Religion* we profeſs, and its *Foundations* be ſo far deſtroyed as to let *Anarchy*, and *Confuſion* be the badg of the *Proteſtant*. No: Let it be the *Reproach*, and the *ſingle reproach of our Enemies*, that 'tis only in throwing down *Foundations*, that their *Cauſe* can proſper: in Subverting all the *Laws* of God, and Man, all the *Principles of true Chriſtian Religion*, that they muſt ever hope to advance *their Catholick Faith*.

Order against Hawkers, *Septemb* 7. 1679. See the Right Honourable Sir *Robert Clayton*'s Speech, Lord Mayor Elect, and the Right Honourable Sir *James Edwards* Speech, *Septem.* 29. 1679.

For what elſe is their *unbounded Primacy* of the Pope, but the overthrowing all * *Govern-*

* *Clerici legibus civilibus, ut ſunt Leges Principum, non tenentur obligatione aliquâ correctivâ, ſed ſolum directivâ. Non poſſunt tamen à Magiſtratu politico puniri, nec ullo modo trahi ad Magiſtratus Secularis Tribunal.* Bellarm. de Cleric. l. 1.

A Clericis, qui jure ſubjectionis exempti ſunt, propriè quidem Majeſtatem non lædi. Eudæmon Jeſuita Apolog. c. 34. p. 110.

Clerici Rebellionem non esse crimen lesæ Majestatis, quia non est subditus Regi. Zimanch. Aphoris. de Cons.

Juramentum Fidelitatis ne suscipi quidem posse à Papistis nostris sine Fidei Catholicæ abnegatione. Bellarm. Resp. ad Apolog. *pro juram. Fidel.*

De Fide certum esse, quemcunque Principem Christianum, si à Religione Catholicâ manifesto deflexerit, & alios avocare voluerit, excidere statim omni potestate, & dignitate, idque ante prolatam Papæ sententiam: possèque & debere subditos si vires habeant, istiusmodi Hæreticum ex hominum Christianorum Dominatu ejicere. Philopat. Sect. 2. p. 109. *& Suarez in Libro de Censuris*, Disp. 15. Sect. 6. p. 262. hath many things to the same sense.

Non licere Christianis tolerare Regem Hæreticum, si ille conetur subditos ad suam hæresin protrahere, Bellarm. de Rom. Pontif. 5. 7.

Sed & Christiani Principes, qui diu in Ecclesiasticam potestatem tyrannico furore surrexerunt, cui flectere genua, & caput submittere debuerant, Nonne sacris Conciliis sunt depositi, percussi Anathemate, pulsi regno, atque imperio? Ut Ladislaus, Leo III. Henricus III. Fredericus II. Constantinus VI. Conc. t. 14. p. 992. In Orat. Cornelii Episcopi Bitontini.

1. *Oportere Jesuitas in suo Generali, ac multo magis in quovis Pontifice Romano non hominem erroribus obnoxium considerare, sed ipsum Christum, qui est sapientia Patris intueri, atque horum vocem excipere, non secus ac Christi ipsius, qui nec decipi potest, nec decipere.*

2. *Debere eos apud animum suum statuere, se moveri, ac dirigi à divinâ voluntate & providentiâ, quoquoversus moventur, ac dirigantur à suo Superiore. Maffeius in vita* Loyolæ. l. 3. c. 7.

Prudentiam esse solius Imperantis non autem Obedientis virtutem. Sum. Constitut. Jesuit. Regul. 36.

In Colloquio Ratisbon. Sess. 9. p. 282. & 288. *confidenter asserunt Jesuitæ, Populum ita subjectum esse Regimini Præpositorum suorum, ut si illi in aliquo dubio definiendo errarint, populus ut Regiminis errare simul possit, imò deberet.*

These as a few of those multitudes of Testimonies and Authorities which might be cited under this head, he who desires more of the particulars shall need only to consult the Bull of *Pius* IV. *Conc. Trident.* p. 944, 945 946. *Con. t.* 14. *Anno* 1564. where the Errors alluded to in this part of our continued discourse, are with many others reckon'd up to our hand, and confirm'd by the Pope as Articles of Faith, and as such to be professed by every one therein concern'd.

ment in the World? The wresting the Scepter out of the Princes hand, which God Himself put

put there? And giving such *Laws* and *Rules* of Obedience as are utterly inconsistent with all *Civil Power*! And, as if this were not enough, wresting the Scepter out of Gods own hand too? That greatest *Royalty* of his Crown, to forgive sins; by giving that absurd Licence, and impunity to all manner of Transgressions, which he were *not God*, must forfeit *the Holiness*, and *Justice of the Divine Nature*, should he permit? Again, Is there any Prerogative of Heaven equal to the *Infallibility* they usurp? Or can any thing reconcile the *Infallibility* they pretend to, with the many *Contradictions* their Religion defends!

'Twould be no difficulty to demonstrate, that *they* who so far depose *Christ* in his *Kingly Office*, as to set up another in his stead, to *dispense with his Laws*, and *give new Rules and measures* of Obedience *to his Subjects*.

That *they* who so far evacuate his *Prophetick Office*, as in fact at least to deny, that *he led his Apostles into all Truth*, as appears by their Doctrines concerning *Civil Powers* and *submissions* due to them; according to which, what was to be taught and allowed in their Times, when the Christians had no Force to oppose them, is not true Gospel now.

That they who so far depress him in his *Priestly Office* too, as to joyn *new Mediators*, *and*

Inter-

Interceſſors with him: to find out *new Saviours*, and *new merit*, whereby men may be juſtified: Or to take it, in their own language, they, who in *Conſecrating the Hoſt* put it in the Power of the Prieſt *to make his God*, and moſt blaſphemouſly give him the ſame attributes, we aſcribe to the great *Creator of all things*: I ſay, 'twould certainly be no difficulty to demonſtrate, that, they, who do this, can have no deſign, but to deſtroy all *Foundations*: to baniſh *God* and *Religion* out of the World, and according to the profeſt practice of ſome among them, who have been the moſt Zealous in making Proſelytes, firſt to make men *Atheiſts*, that they may thereby be the better diſpos'd to be fit Converts to *their Faith*.

It cannot be expected I ſhould upon this Occaſion run through all the *Artifices* of ſuch men to give ſucceſs to their miſchiefs: No, the *Myſtery of Iniquity* is too hidden to be ſo eaſily diſcover'd; only for the Riſe of all 'twill be ſufficient to obſerve, that 'tis the ſame *Malice* and *Envy*, which inſpires the *Devil* and his *wicked Inſtruments*: That 'tis the *common Intereſt* both have againſt *Chriſt* and his *Members*, the *Enmity* which was begun in *Heaven itſelf* by the *Apoſtacy of* Lucifer *and his Adherents*, who rebelled againſt *God* and his *Government there*; and 'tis not at all to be admired

if

If they have been ſtill propagating the *ſame* in all the ſucceſſive *Treaſons* and *Rebellions* againſt his *Vicegerents* to this day.

No wonder that the *beſt of Governments* have been always moſt expoſed to their *Malice*, when the *Tongues* that are ſo *keen* againſt them have been as *ſharply whetted* againſt the *Juſtice of Divine Providence*; an effectual inſtance whereof, we have *Ezekiel* xviii. *verſe* 2. *and* 25. Where the blaſphemous *Jews* in their affliction ſtick not to charge their *Grievances* on *God* himſelf: not conſidering that 'twas not the *Fathers eating the ſour Grapes* (as they moſt impiouſly apply the Proverb there) but the *Childrens chewing them*, (as I may ſay) *after them*, I mean *their following their ill example*, which *ſet their Teeth on edge*: Not the *Inequality of Gods ways*, (as they had Atheiſtically ſuggeſted) but *that Iniquity of their own*, which preſt ſo heavy upon them.

3. And this one would think, (which was the laſt thing we propos'd to ſpeak to under this Head) ſhould be ſufficient to convince the wicked of the *Folly* of all their ill Practices, that as 'tis from themſelves, that all theirs, and the *Publick's Miſchief* ariſe, ſo that they cannot but expect they ſhould *return on their own head*.

For,

Res est profecto stulta nequitiæ modus. Jer. vi. 7. Job xv. 16.

For, beſides that all *Wickedneſs* in its own nature is *unbounded* and *infinite*; ſuch the *overflowing of theſe waters* (as the Scripture often compares them) that he who once pulls *up the Sluces* cannot aſſure himſelf that he ſhall not be ſwept away *in the common Inundation*; he that *removes the Hedg*, as the *Jews* ſtile *the Law*, cannot be ſecure, that he ſhall never ſuffer by the Treſpaſs: Beſides, I ſay, that this is the *Natural reſult of all wickedneſs*, as ſuch, that the ſinner himſelf can ſet no bounds to it; how can they, who are ſo forward to drudge in the ſervice of the *Devil*, but think that that *Apollyon, or deſtroyer*, as he is called *Revel.* ix. 11. will be as ready to ſtir up others to practiſe the ſame, or greater *Miſchiefs* on themſelves?

Can they conſider that the *Change* they drive at, is in that *variable Subject* (for ſuch are the *people*, ſuch are all *human Affairs*) which is ſtill capable of *new alterations*! And can they hope that the ſame *inconſtancy* they make uſe of in them, may not be turn'd to their own Ruin? Or can they reaſonably expect that the *various Temper and Complexion of the multitude*, (who ſeldom know what they would have) ſhould juſt jump with their preſent deſigns? Or to take the meaſure by themſelves, have their own deſigns, their own counſels, been, or will they always be, what they now are?

Or are they ſure to over-reach the *Cunning of others*, who know, as well as themſelves, how to make *a ſhew of* one thing, whilſt they deſigne *quite another*? Whoſe *Craft*, and *Subtilty* 'tis to carry on men by degrees to what they never intended? And in a quite different way of Policy, *under the very Guiſe of Religion, and Holineſs*, to outdoe them in all they contrive againſt the Publick; like what we read of the *Adverſaries of* Judah *and* Benjamin, *Ezra*, 4. 2. who know how to *ruine the Temple, by building with them*, by ſeeming to be in the very work, which 'tis their chief purpoſe *to hinder*, and under the *glorious pretence of Reformation there*, of cutting off only *what's luxuriant, or peccant*, in *Church* and *State*, ſo to *prune the Tree* till at laſt they cut it up *Root and Branch*.

Or were they ſure that none of theſe things would attend their *wicked purpoſes*; That, *when they bend the bowe, and make ready the Arrow upon the ſtring*, there were none could *outſhoot* them at their own *Mark*: none, who could outgoe them in the baſe and unmanly *pleaſures* of *delighting in* Miſchief: None, who would contend with them for the Reſemblance and likeneſs they bear to the Devil? I ſay, were they ſure of all this, yet can they ſet bounds too to the *Juſtice of* Divine Providence? Are they well adviſed that *He* neither *can* not *will infatuate their Counſels*? That *He* who made (*a*) *Pharaoh*, notwithſtanding all his

(*a*) Exod. 1. 2

proud Boasts, *know who the Lord was, that he should obey him*: He, who put his (*b*) *hook in the Nose of Sennacherib*, and his mighty Hoste; He, who in despite of all their Enemies, made the *Jews* so often to wax stronger under the Oppression, whatever *the Tumult of the People*, whatever, as the wicked Multitude is in the (*c*) Psalms compared to them, the *Noise of the Seas*, and the *Noise of their Waves*, that *He*, who (*d*) *sets bounds to* the Sea, cannot say to *these proud Billows, hitherto shall ye come, and no farther.*

b 2 King. 19. 28.

c Ps. 65. 7.

d Job. 38. 10, 11.

I have done with the first Head, which was to consider, 1. the *Foundations the wicked are so solicitous to destroy, in the mischiefs they design against the Righteous*, with, 2. *what the Interest and true grounds are, which move them to such attempts*, and, 3. *Their great Folly in such their designs*: I proceed to the second, *viz.*

2. *That in these designs of the Wicked against the Righteous, all that the Righteous can do, is to trust in God.*

And that implies these two things.

1. A relying upon him for safety and deliverance.

2. A behaving themselves so towards Him in whom they trust, as to do nothing whereby to put themselves out of his Protection.

1. In all the Designs of the Wicked against the Righteous, it is the Duty of the Righteous to rely upon

upon God only for ſafety and deliverance, and that they will find they have great reaſon to do, as they conſider how many ways their *gracious God* is, as I may ſay, obliged to deliver them: How His *Holineſs*,

His *Power*,

His *Omniſcience*,

His *Juſtice*, are all concern'd in the *Protection of the Righteous.*

1. God is in *his Holineſs* concern'd for the ſafety of the Righteous; and that whether by his Holineſs we underſtand the *Purity of his Eſſence*, or *of his Religion*: The *Immaculate Perfections* of his own Nature, or the *Imitation of theſe* he requires from all who ingage in his ſervice; agreeable to what is ſo particularly urged in the words immediately after the Text, of *his being in his holy Temple.*

For how can we imagine, that *He* who is himſelf of *the greateſt Purity*, ſhould not favour thoſe who endeavour to make good the *Image and ſimilitude of God in which they were made*, by *cleanſing themſelves*, as the Apoſtle expreſſes it, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. *from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit.*

Can there be any thing more *acceptable* to the *Divine Being*, than to ſee ſuch a *Reſemblance* of his *own perfections* in his Creature?

Or with reference to his *Religion*, to be exercis'd in his *holy Temple*, can there be any thing

more *reasonable*, than for them to expect the *Blessings of the Temple*, who are so faithful to attend its *Worship*?

Was not this *the place* towards which, under the Law, *his eyes were open'd night and day*? as we read, 1 *Kings* 8. 29. *the place where he put his Name*? where (*a*) *his honour was said to dwell*? *the place* (*b*) *towards which* whoever, and in what condition soever, did but *pray*, was sure to be heard *in Heaven*? So that whatever were *the Trespass between man and man*, (*c*) here was *the place* to decide it: whatever the *affliction* under which they were, whether *led Captive* into a strange Land, or punisht by *Famine*, *Sword*, or any other of *God's just Judgments* for their sin, in their own; if they had but thoughts of returning to his *Religion and Service*, He who *had set apart the godly to himself*, as 'tis *Psalm* 4. 3. could not but in the defence of his own *Name* and *Honour*, which he had made to dwell there, likewise *distinguish them in his care*, and uphold them in *the work* to which he called them.

a Ps. 26. 8.
b King. 1. 8. 30.
c ibid. v. 31.

Such was the *Protection*, *the Holiness* to which they were *separated*, then gave: such the *security of flying to the Altar*, that the very *Oblation* of their *Wills*, their true and earnest desire of appearing there before God, was a *Sacrifice* he would not refuse.

2. A second Reason why the Righteous should look

look upon it as the only Remedy againſt the Treatment they meet with from the Wicked, to *put their truſt in God*, is, becauſe of the *honour of his Power concern'd in their deliverance.*

'Tis with reſpect to his *Soveraign Dominion and Rule* over all, that *his Throne* is in the next words ſaid *to be in Heaven*: and certainly that is not *a Throne*, that can *be eſtabliſht by iniquity.* Heaven, as 'tis a place where no *injuſtice can enter*, ſo much leſs can it *prevail againſt it*; nothing can reſiſt the *Power* and *Supremacy* of him who ſits there.

Changes, *Alterations*, and *Viciſſitudes* may be in things below; but to the *Heaven*, in which his *Throne* is, it belongs only to over-rule, not feel theſe. He who *dwells above*, may for the purpoſes of his *own glory* permit the Cruelty and Oppreſſion of the Violent, but ſo, that his permitting and converting theſe *to his own glory*, is none of the meaneſt inſtances of *his Power*; that in all the Motions which are made about it, all the Commotions which are made againſt it, yet ſtill his *Throne is in Heaven*, the place of *Bliſs* and *Holineſs*; and they who hope to interrupt the Righteous in either, do but thereby prepare themſelves for a ſeverer Sentence *at this Tribunal*: Which of how great moment muſt it be to the good man, thus to conſider the *over-ruling Power of him in whom he truſts!* that if, as 'tis v. 1. the

the wicked *ſay unto his Soul, flee as a Bird unto your Mountain, Heaven* is that *Mountain* whither he can *flee*, there the *Hills from whence cometh his help*, Pſalm. 121. 1.

3. A third Attribute which ought to incourage the Righteous *to truſt in God*, is that of his *Omniſcience*; for ſo the *Pſalmiſt* adds in the ſame verſe, *His eyes behold, and his eye-lids try the Children of men.*

Did not God know, as the *Pſalmiſt* brings in the Wicked making his boaſt againſt the Righteous, *Pſalm 73. 11.* and *were there no knowledge in the moſt High*, there were then ſome reaſon why his people ſhould ſpare ſome of their *over-forward confidence*, and abate of that *ſo full* and *abſolute truſt* they put in him; becauſe whatever *his Holineſs* is to *deteſt*, whatever *his Power* to *avenge injuſtice*, yet what would all this ſignifie, if he had *no privity* of the *Fact?*

But then on the contrary, for the *Wicked* as well as the *Righteous* to be always *under his eye*, to be ſeen and detected in their cloſeſt Devices, to have their very *Imaginations* lye open before him, their ſecreteſt Councels, and moſt *hidden works of darkneſs* ſtill in the *light of his Countenance*, to have (pardon the lowneſs of the compariſon) as you may have ſometime ſeen in excellent Pictures, where the *Archer* is ſo painted, as in every poſture of the *Beholder* to direct his *Arrow at him*, to have

I ſay

I say, this ἔνδικον ὄμμα, *the Eye of Vengeance* always *aiming at the Offender*; *Him*, who must be his *Judge*, to be still present, not only at the *committing*, but the *first designing* of the Crime, *to see*, *to watch*, and *over-awe* him in every motion; How must this be cause of joy and transport to the Righteous in his greatest Sufferings, as being hereby assur'd that nothing can befall him, as without the *Cognizance*, so, which is one signification of the *Eye*, without *the Pity and Compassion* of his good God: That 'tis *He*, who *knows* and *sees* all things, who permits the Enemy to design against him; *He* too, of whose *Omniscience* this must be one Effect; that *he knows what's best for him*; that as his *Eye-lids try the Children of men* in general, so in particular they try the *Righteous*, as the *Refiner* doth his *best* and *most valued Mettals*, to bring them more *clean and purged*, *freer from dross and dregs* out of the *Fire*; that 'tis only to make them *fitter Objects* for his own *Love* and *Favour*; that whom, with the rest of Mankind, his *Eye cannot but see*, as 'tis Verse the last of the Psalm, *his Countenance may behold*; *i. e.* encourage and approve.

4. The last Argument I shall take notice of in the Psalm, why in the *Designs of the Wicked against the Righteous*, *all that they can do is to trust in God*, is, because of the *honour of his Justice* likewise concerned for them; As, *He whose Throne*

is in Heaven, ſits there, as the juſt recompence of
V. 6. their doings, (*a*) *to rain Snares, Fire and Brimſtone, and an horrible Tempeſt* on the Wicked.

And certainly, if any thing can ſatisfie the *Oppreſt*, That they ſhall not always be *ſo*, that there will be a time when *Right* ſhall be done them; nothing is more likely to do it, than when they ſhall conſider that God, *the juſt, the holy, the powerful, the Omniſcient Lord* of all, hath reſerved to himſelf the Correction of their Enemies: That however they may at preſent go on ſmoothly in their Wickedneſs, yet, that their Proſperity it ſelf, their moſt Fortunate Miſchiefs, are but their *Snares*; that, as *Solomon* deſcribes the madman, *Prov.* 26. 18. caſting about Firebrands, and ſaying, *am I not in ſport,* yet 'twill not be ſo, when returned in this *Fire* and *Brimſtone*; when the *Storms* they delight to raiſe here ſhall end in a more *horrible Tempeſt* to themſelves, and the *Cup*, however they now mix all with jollity, *which is to be their Portion*, ſhall be only that of *everlaſting trembling* and *amazement.*

This as to the firſt part of that *Truſt* the Righteous are to put *in the Lord*; as it ſignifies their *relying upon him for ſafety and deliverance*, as he is their *Holy*, their *Powerful*, their *Wiſe*, their *Juſt Protector*; the ſecond thing to be conſider'd in this *Truſt*, is,

2. *Their behaving themſelves ſo towards the Lord,*

in

in whom they are upon all these forementioned Reasons to trust, as to do nothing whereby they may put themselves out of his Protection.

For that may be the case of God's own People: How often did this befall *the Jews*, that *God* cast them off, and deserted them? Was it not their sad Fate, as in all their *Captivities abroad*, so in all their *Superstitions and Idolatries at home?* What was it *gave them* up at any time into the *hand* of their Enemies, but that they first delivered *up themselves* to their *sins?*

And if the Christian shall write after this Copy, if they, who have all these Reasons for their *Trust* and *Faith* in God, shall be such *Infidels* in their Duty, as to forget that they are the *Righteous* only, who have any title in them; if, as 'tis *Hosea* 10. 2. they will thus *be found faulty*, be such an *empty Vine*, as the Allusion there is, *v.* 1. as *to bring forth* Fruit *only to themselves, none to that God* from whom they expect this *safety*; what then, as it follows, *v.* 3. *should a King do unto them?* Nay, what can God himself do unto, or for them, if they put it out of the Power of either to be their Saviour?

In vain do men talk either of the Excellency of the *Government* or *Laws* they live under, and the Protection they look for thence, if they despise *both.*

In vain to boast the *Religion* we profess, if we are not resolv'd to live up to the *Rules of* it.

In vain to hope for *ſecurity* from the *Altar*, if we give not *that* that ſame Priviledge we pretend to by it.

To ſpeak plain: We live in Times of great *difficulties* and *danger*, wherein every one would be glad to provide for his own *Peace*; but what are the *Methods* we take to *procure* it?

We can talk with great *noyſe* and *zeale of* and *for* the *Proteſtant Religion*, but do our *Actions* and *Tongues* ſpeak the ſame *Language*? What is it we inveigh againſt in *that Church* whoſe *Errors* we ſeem ſo much to deteſt? Is it not that *Primacy of the Pope*, which ſets up *above all that is called God*? Is it not *that Infallibility* whereby we think he too *arrogantly aſſumes* the *determining matters of Faith and Religion*? and what are we advantaged by the *Invective*, if every private perſon (ſuch is the Ungoverned Licenſe of the Age we live in) *uſurps theſe to himſelf*?

I am not ſo rigid to deny every man the uſe of his *own judgment*; the exerciſe of thoſe *diſcerning Faculties* he is endowed with, as a *reaſonable Creature*; but ſure 'tis a *great* difference between being *wiſe to Sobriety*, and impoſing every *Conceit* and *whimſey of our own* upon the *Publick*: A very vaſt *difference* between *ſubmitting to God's Providence* in the *Government* he hath ſet over us, and being every day *preparing for*, I know not what *Alterations* in *Church* and *State*.

Rom. 12. 3. φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν.

Men

Men may, if they pleaſe, call this *truſting in the Lord, and committing their* Religion *to his* Providence, but would it not do very well to take ſome of the *Rules of that* Religion along with them? to bethink themſelves of that *Peaceable*,

Meek,

Humble,

Charitable Temper, which ought to be the Badg of every good Chriſtian, and if they do ſo, they would then find, *That to truſt* in *the Lord*, were to *wait upon him in his own way*, to expect ſafety and deliverance only in doing their Duty.

If in *Power*, then to conſider that the *Foundations* they are to maintain, are the LAWS and RELIGION.

If in the *Capacity of Subjects*, what they are then to contribute *to this*, is to be Obedient to *both*.

Not to think themſelves all *Princes*, any otherwiſe than *Iſrael* was by (*a*) *wreſtling with God in Prayer*, by appplying to him in their daily Devotions for *his Bleſſing* on the *Publick*, and endeavouring to make their *Devotions effectual*, by ſo living that themſelves be not the *Curſe of it*: That for their *Sins*; their *Diſcontents*, *Murmurings*, and *Repining*; for their *Diſobedience*, and *Injuſtice*; their *Intemperance*, and *Wantonneſs*; their *Prophaneneſs* and *Irreligion*, they

(*a*) Gen. 32. 24.

do not provoke God to give us up to those *Judgments* they are so forward to charge upon the *miscarriages* of others.

That if it should be the *Irrepairable Fate* of this Nation (which the good Lord of his Mercy avert, I hope those *warnings* he hath given and is still giving, will have that effect upon us, that we may timely apply to him to do it) that, I say, if it should be the *Irrepairable Fate* of the Nation, to have its *Foundations destroy'd*, as the Old Translation reads it, we might be able to put the Question, *What hath the Righteous done?* and to answer it in the *Innocent and Inoffensive Carriage of good men*; those, for *whom* God will find *Mercy* in the *midst of his Judgments*, that there is *nothing they have done* to bring on the *Ruine:* No, they are the *good men* who are the Safeguard of them, amongst whom they live; God could not *destroy* (*a*)*Sodom* till *Righteous Lot* was departed thence: It may be the case of a Land, as 'tis threatned *Ezekiel* 14. 14. that though *Noah*, *Daniel* and *Job* were in it (and I trust in God there are many such *in this Nation*, *in this City*) *they should deliver but their own Souls by their righteousness.*

a Gen. 19.

However, let that be our *study*, that we may think at least of *delivering our own Souls*; 'tis worth our *care*, were there no *benefit* to redound to the *Publick* by it; worth our care, if (*b*) *Judgment must begin at the house of God*, that the *sin* which brings it on

b 1 Pet. 4. 17.

begin

begin not there: That when it ſhall be ask'd, *What have the Righteous done?* only *our Prayers and Interceſſions* for the good of the Nation:

Our Litanies *for Mankind,*
for our Enemies,
for them who would deſtroy all Foundations.
Our *meek and charitable Behaviour to all,*
Our *Bleſſing them that Curſe us,*
doing good to them that hate us,
praying for them that deſpitefully uſe and perſecute us. Mat. 5. 44.
Our *Conſtancy to the Reform'd Faith,*
Our *Renouncing the Principles and Errours of our Adverſaries.*
Our *Duty and Loyalty to our Superiours,*
Our *equal Deteſtation of Sacriledge and Idolatry:* That theſe, with all thoſe other Chriſtian *Vertues* and *Graces,* which we profeſs and teach, may be the Anſwer we have to return to ſuch a *Queſtion.*

And then I am ſure, whatever become of *the Foundations, ſi fractus illabatur Orbis,* ſhould the World it ſelf daſh in pieces about us, *impavidos ferient ruinæ,* the Ruines that ſtrike upon us, could not touch *our Courage and Reſolution,* any more than *our Innocence:* No, there's a *firmer Bottom* on which all ſtands, even the (*a*) *Rock of Ages, That God,* whoſe *Holineſs,*

(*a*) *Iſa.* 26. 4. *For ſo, what in the common reading is* everlaſting ſtrength, *is to be render'd according to the Hebrew.*

whoſe

whoſe *Power*,
whoſe *Omniſcience*,
whoſe *Juſtice will*, in his due time, *do us Right:* If not *here*, at leaſt in *that Heaven*, where *his Throne is*,

In that holy Temple, from whence he now looks down to encourage the *Conflict*, and applaud the *Triumph of our Patience*; and having by what ways he thinks beſt *prov'd* and *prepar'd* us *for himſelf*, will take us up into *that* of *his* and *our Glory*.

To which happy ſtate he in his mercy bring us all, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, to whom with the Father and holy Spirit, be praiſe, honour, and Adoration, now and always. Amen.

FINIS.